Genocide: from emotion and morality to legal and political action

BY Uğur Ümit Uşaklı

Genocide: from emotion and morality to legal and political action

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Since 1945, a fundamental reversal has occurred in the definition of the value allotted to human lives. The murder of the Jews ignited a renewed awareness of human life. And today the Jews are not the only victims. This is not only a result and continuation of WWI, a new war is raging, with an intensity and scale that few would have predicted.

The profound politicization and tabloidization leads to strange responses on hearing the very word, from Pavlov reflex to Nazi responses. Nevertheless it is possible to prolong the discussion on the definition of the term "genocide." Here the discussion is avoided by academics, due to the threatening political atmosphere involved and polemical way, he writes in the introduction, "to strive for a scientific concept that is discussed and used in politics and culture, and in some degree as a tool of national survival." His book, a hodgepodge of whole and half truths, tries. Country per country, Aksoy superflously lists subjects such as "Christian persecution" and "genocide can only be defined by jurists, not by social scientists or historians." Hereafter he embarked on a tedious discussion of formulations and interpretations of the UN definition in an attempt to delegitimate its applicability to the Armenian case. The fact that the UN definition is limited to mass murder against ethnic groups is not sufficiently been researched has its reasons, according to the author, the Jews.

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